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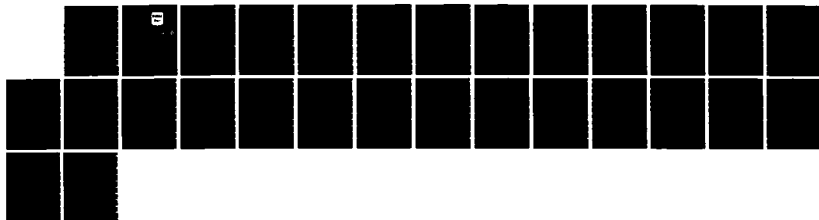
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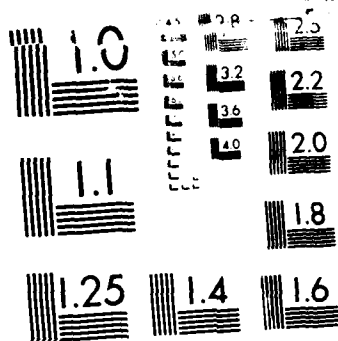
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# STUDENT ESSAY

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TERRORISM: THE CHALLENGE AND THE RESPONSE

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL JOHN J. TARPLEY, OD

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relatively new mode of warfare which poses a significant threat to the American system of government and way of life. The inability of a government to respond effectively to terrorist incidents undermines the confidence of both its citizens and its allies. Terrorists attempt to inspire and manipulate fear to achieve their purposes. The last two decades have seen a dramatic increase in international terrorism; this trend is likely to continue. The terrorist incidents of 1985 illustrate that terrorism is increasingly directed against the U.S. and the other Western democracies. Our responses to terrorism must have legal and moral foundations and must be politically feasible. The U.S. has a clearly stated antiterrorism policy and an effective governmental structure to deal with terrorism. Our national strategy must embrace the whole range of threats to American citizens, property, and interests. The strategy can be divided into three broad categories: defensive, managerial, and long-term. Terrorism can be managed and controlled, but not eliminated.

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USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

TERRORISM: THE CHALLENGE AND THE RESPONSE

INDIVIDUAL ESSAY

by

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7 April 1986

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# ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: John J. Tarpley, LTC, OD

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International terrorism is a complex and increasingly lethal challenge to international order, to the United States and to the community of democratic nations. This essay reviews the definitional problems and nature of terrorism. The act of terrorism has been practiced for centuries for many reasons with varying degrees of success. In recent years, terrorism has emerged as a sophisticated strategy for use as a political weapon. It is essential to recognize that terrorism has purposes and goals; it is a relatively new mode of warfare which poses a significant threat to the American system of government and way of life. The inability of a government to respond effectively to terrorist incidents undermines the confidence of both its citizens and its allies. Terrorists attempt to inspire and manipulate fear to achieve their purposes. The last two decades have seen a dramatic increase in international terrorism; this trend is likely to continue. The terrorist incidents of 1985 illustrate that terrorism is increasingly directed against the U.S. and the other Western democracies. Our responses to terrorism must have legal and moral foundations and must be politically feasible. The U.S. has a clearly stated antiterrorism policy and an effective governmental structure to deal with terrorism. Our national strategy must embrace the whole range of threats to American citizens, property and interests. The strategy can be divided into three broad categories: defensive, managerial and long-term. Terrorism can be managed and controlled, but not eliminated.

Terrorism poses a complex and increasingly lethal challenge to the United States, to international order and to the community of democratic nations. While the challenge is clear, effective response is a matter of ongoing debate. This paper will review the nature of terrorism, governmental structure and current policy to deal with the problem and recommend an effective United States strategy for combatting terrorism.

The word "terror" is derived from the Latin word "terrere" which means "to frighten." The expression "terrorism" is derived from the terms "Reign of Terror" or "Red Terror", applied to the period of vindictive and deadly atrocities committed during the French Revolution (March 1793-July 1794). Political violence and terrorism are not new. Since the beginning of time, terrorist acts have included assassinations, seizing hostages and a variety of other atrocities that only fiendish minds could devise.<sup>1</sup> A study of terrorism has significance because terrorism is a serious challenge to our democratic system, beliefs, values and policies. Terrorism has become a part of our daily news diet. Hardly a day goes by without news of an assassination, political kidnapping, hijacking or bombing somewhere in the world. Because incidents of terrorism have increased in the past decade, the phenomenon of terrorism has become one of increasing concern to governments.

Terrorism, a perplexing phenomenon facing today's world, is a confusing topic because of the diversity of people who practice it and the general mystique which surrounds most terrorist organizations. When we speak of terrorism, it is not always clear what we mean. Much of the confusion



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surrounding the ongoing international and domestic discussions of the problems of terrorism stems from the fact that the term "terrorism" lacks a precise and internationally accepted definition.<sup>2</sup> Neither the United States nor the United Nations has adopted official definitions of terrorism. In September 1972, the United States introduced a draft treaty on international terrorism for consideration by the United Nations General Assembly. This proposal was soundly defeated by a coalition of Third World and Communist states. The United States and other supporters of the draft treaty argued that terrorism was a humanitarian issue, assuming that a broad consensus existed that terrorism was in fact a problem and that disagreements about the issue were limited to technical questions of how the problem of terrorism should be dealt with. In debate, these nations' representatives stressed humanitarian themes such as the need for preserving international order and the preservation of innocent lives from terrorist attack. The coalition of Third World and Communist states which blocked the American efforts for a multilateral convention rejected the humanitarian theme and considered terrorism to be a political issue resulting from struggles against what they considered to be racist and colonialist regimes.<sup>3</sup>

The act of terrorism has been practiced for centuries for many reasons and has been used with varying degrees of success. In recent years, terrorism has undergone major reorganization and redefinition and has emerged as a sophisticated strategy for use as a political weapon. Terrorists see themselves and their causes as legitimate and feel that they are entitled to use diplomacy or force. The fundamental difference between the terrorist and the criminal rests with their respective objectives.

The furtherance of a political cause is the terrorists' ultimate justification; the criminals' motivation is selfish material gain. In general, contemporary terrorists are young, well-educated, middle class and belong to a highly structured organization. They are motivated by some political philosophy and are devoted to a particular cause. Contemporary terrorism embraces a wide variety of political phenomena. It often involves groups of individuals who are members of an affluent, industrialized society whose aim is to destroy that society in the name of some revolutionary concept. Examples of such terrorist groups include the U.S. Weather Underground, the German Baader-Meinhof gang (which evolved into the Red Army Faction), Japanese Red Army and the Italian Red Brigade. Other groups of terrorists espouse more traditional causes such as the establishment of a homeland for the Palestinians, the unification of Ireland or independence for Puerto Rico.<sup>4</sup> A third category of terrorism is the kind prevalent in Latin America - a type of "tactical" terrorism used to support a broader military campaign or insurgency.

Terrorism is a difficult, emotional subject. It is a phenomenon that is easier to describe than to define. The most recent U.S. definition states that terrorism is the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population or any segment thereof in furtherance of political or social objectives.<sup>5</sup> Many other definitions exist and it seems as if every terrorism author has his own definition which is normally based on his viewpoint or area of expertise. I will not provide a personal definition of terrorism and will provide the reader only the above-stated general defi-

inition which was published in February 1986 in the Public Report of the Vice President's Task Force on Combatting Terrorism. My review of the terrorism literature reveals that international organizations such as the League of Nations and the United Nations and terrorism experts have been unable to provide a common, universally accepted definition. It was not until December 1985 that the United Nations General Assembly, with strong U.S. support, passed by consensus vote its first unequivocal resolution condemning terrorism. While such a resolution is largely symbolic and lacks implementing procedures, it is an important step in the development of a consensus among all nations that terrorism is unacceptable behavior. My conclusion is that there will never be a definition of terrorism to which all nations of the world will subscribe. We in the United States, however, should continue to work toward a definition which is acceptable to and embraced by all agencies of our government and our citizens. A common United States definition is essential in identifying and understanding this difficult, emotional subject.

It is essential to recognize that terrorism is a relatively new mode of warfare - a form of low-intensity, unconventional aggression located at the lower end of the warfare spectrum. According to Von Clausewitz the purpose of military action is to achieve political goals. "War is not a mere act of policy but a true political instrument, a continuation of political activity by other means."<sup>6</sup> Terrorism can be thought of as a weapon of the weak; it is a kind of warfare that is capable of being used against strong adversaries. Americans must realize that terrorism poses a significant threat not only to our system of government, beliefs

and way of life, but also to international order and stability. Terrorism attempts to alter or undermine governmental authority or behavior. The inability of a government to respond effectively to terrorist incidents undermines the confidence of both its citizens and its allies. Terrorism is escalating as a form of surrogate warfare, whereby small groups with direct or indirect support from a foreign state are able to engage in low-intensity, inexpensive and relatively risk-free conflict at the national level.

Terrorism has a purpose. It is not senseless, mindless violence as it is sometimes described. Terrorism is done for many reasons and covers a lot of different things. First, terrorism may be aimed at obtaining specific concessions, such as the release of prisoners, the payment of ransom or the publication of a message, under threat of death or destruction. In order to increase their bargaining power, terrorists may create a hostage situation in order to coerce a government into fulfilling their demands.

Second, terrorism may be aimed at gaining publicity. Terrorists may seek to attract attention to their cause and project themselves as a powerful force that deserves attention and must be reckoned with. The publicity gained by acts of violence and the climate of fear created cause people to overestimate the importance and strength of the terrorists and their movement. Terrorist attacks are often carefully staged to attract the attention of the electronic media and the international press. Television and satellite communications have helped to provide almost instantaneous publicity. The taking and holding of hostages increases the

drama. If certain demands are not met, hostages may be killed. The hostages as persons often mean nothing to the terrorists. The terrorist act is aimed at the people watching, not the actual victims. Terrorism is highly choreographed theatre.

Third, a purpose of terrorism may be to assault a government or to seek the overreactions of a government. Terrorists may seek to deliberately provoke repressions and reprisals, which may eventually lead to the collapse of a government. For example, attacks against government security or law enforcement personnel or kidnappings of foreign diplomats may cause a government to overreact against the terrorists - a fact which may lead citizens to express considerable criticism and a lack of confidence.

A fourth purpose of terrorism may be to obtain obedience and cooperation. The desired outcome of this type of terrorism is a prescribed pattern of behavior such as obedience to the cause or full cooperation in identifying enemies. The success of such terrorism depends on the creation of an atmosphere of fear and its effect on the target audience.

A fifth purpose of terrorism may be to cause widespread disorder, the demoralization of society or a breaking down of the social order. This objective is typical of revolutionary terrorists whose aim is to have the people join their cause because of the ineptitude of the present government.

A final purpose of terrorism is to punish. Terrorists often declare that the victims of their attacks are somehow guilty. A person may be considered guilty because he has committed a crime such as opposing or disobeying the terrorists or because he has cooperated with another guilty

party or government. Victims of terrorists may be chosen because their success in business or their lifestyle represents a system despised by the terrorists or the victim may have worked for, supported, accepted a visa from or travelled on the airline of an enemy government.

Sometimes terrorists have a very narrow definition of "innocent" bystander. Terrorists seem to be saying that if someone is killed in an incident, then that person is somehow guilty. A striking example of this lack of a sense of innocence is the claim by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) that the Christian pilgrims from Puerto Rico who were massacred at the Tel Aviv Airport in 1972 were "guilty" because they had arrived in Israel on Israeli visas and had thereby recognized a state inimical to the Palestinians. The PFLP said that the victims must have been guilty or they would not have been shot. The pilgrims "did not become victims because they were enemies, but rather they became enemies because they happened to be victims"<sup>7</sup>

Central to terrorism is a climate of fear. Terrorists attempt to inspire and manipulate fear to achieve a variety of purposes. Terrorism may be aimed simultaneously at several objectives: specific tactical objectives made explicit by the terrorists, and broader, strategic objectives which may be implicit in the choice of tactics or targets. Although terrorists give many explanations for their violence, three basic concepts predominate: (1) the government itself is violent and can only be overcome by violence; (2) society is sick and unable to cure itself. Violent catalysts of change are needed, and (3) the truth of the terrorist cause justifies any action that supports it.<sup>8</sup>

The term "international terrorism" is frequently mentioned in the literature. It refers to "the threat or use of violence for political purposes when such action is intended to influence the attitude and behavior of a target group other than its immediate victims and its ramifications transcend national boundaries."<sup>9</sup> Again, there is no universal agreement on this "definition." However, terrorism is political violence with a purpose. The problem in the international arena is that there is no agreement on who the terrorists are and who the freedom fighters are.

The last two decades have seen a dramatic increase in international terrorist acts. In 1985, there were 812 incidents, an all-time high. The number of fatalities worldwide were 926, 23 of them American. Over one-third of all incidents over the years were targeted against the United States or its citizens. The greatest threat of international terrorism is to the democracies: half of the worldwide incidents in the 1980's were aimed at only ten countries. The number of terrorist acts has generally risen since the United States first began to compile official statistics in 1968. The unmistakable trend has been toward bloodier incidents with more fatalities.<sup>10</sup> Six basic methods account for about 95% of all terrorist acts: bombings (which account for half of all terrorist incidents), assassinations, armed assaults, kidnappings, hijackings and hostage-barricade situations. Other methods are sabotage, exotic pollution (the use of exotic substances - atomic, chemical or biological - to contaminate material), threat hoaxes and thefts or break-ins.<sup>11</sup> Despite the increasing effectiveness of governments in combatting terrorists, the total volume of terrorism has increased. There are several reasons: (1) terrorists

have become technically more proficient; (2) the composition of terrorist groups has changed - the more ruthless, violent terrorists tend to dominate; (3) the protracted terrorist struggle has brutalized some of the participants, some of whom have been active for over ten years; (4) greater violence is needed than in past years in order to remain in the public headlines; and (5) certain extreme groups in the Middle East believe that great destruction and self-destruction are acceptable methods to achieve their ends.<sup>12</sup>

For a variety of reasons not amenable to U.S. controls, terrorism is likely to increase in the years ahead. The level of violence is likely to increase. Terrorists will employ more sophisticated weapons, methods of operations and tactics. They will continue to generate frustrations and discontent, erode confidence, distract the leadership and threaten the stability of fragile friendly governments. We will see an escalating pattern of state-sponsored terrorism from states such as Iran, Libya, North Korea, Cuba and Nicaragua. During the state visit of Nicaragua's Sandinista leader, Daniel Ortega to North Korea, North Korean president Kim Il-sung stated:

"If the peoples of the revolutionary countries of the world put pressure on and deal blows at United States imperialism in all places where it stretches its talons of aggression, they will make it powerless and impossible to behave as dominator any longer."<sup>13</sup>

Libya's leader, Col. Qadhafi, echoed those words:

"We must force America to fight on a hundred fronts all over the earth. We must force it to fight in Lebanon, to fight in Chad, to fight in Sudan, and to fight in El Salvador."<sup>14</sup>

Americans must pay attention to this international conspiracy of hatred toward the United States, its people, way of life and international stature.



We must also remember that both overt and covert support of terrorism is a part of the Soviet Union's foreign policy. International instability favors the Soviets in their attempt at world domination. Terrorism is not yet a serious challenge to our national will or to our national survival. But as a method of warfare directed against U.S. and other Western democracies, we cannot ignore it and must continue to take firm measures to deal with the challenge which it presents.

The terrorist incidents of 1985 illustrate that terrorism is increasingly directed against the United States and the Western democracies. The June 1985 hijacking of TWA flight 847 shortly after it left Athens (which resulted in the murder of an American sailor) was the first hijacking of a U.S. airliner in the Middle East since 1970. The hijacking of the cruise ship Achille Lauro (which resulted in the murder of an elderly wheelchair bound American who happened to be Jewish), the bombing of a Madrid restaurant frequented by American servicemen and the shooting of off-duty U.S. Marines in El Salvador confirm that the United States is specifically targeted. The year 1985 ended with the brutal attacks in the Vienna and Rome airports where five Americans, including an eleven-year old girl, were murdered. The Rome/Vienna attacks were exceptionally despicable acts which demonstrated the impotence of the United States (and the other affected nations) to prevent this sort of terrorism. What made the Rome attack especially brutal was that children were an intended target. A note carried by Mohammed Sarham, the sole terrorist to survive the Rome airport assault said: "As you have violated our land and our honor, we will violate everything, even your children, to make known the sadness of our children."<sup>15</sup>

The attacks at Rome and Vienna were in retaliation for Israel's bombing of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) headquarters in Tunis in October 1985. According to Israel, the Tunis bombing (which resulted in 20 civilian deaths) were in retaliation for the murder of three Israelis on Cyprus in September 1985. The Cyprus murders were in retaliation for the earlier capture by the Israeli Navy of 20 Palestinians . . . The path of revenge marches back to 1982. That's when Israeli-backed militiamen massacred Palestinian refugees living in the Shatila refugee camp in Beirut, Lebanon. One 16 year old Palestinian boy survived the Shatila slaughter to join the murderers in the Rome airport - the same Mohammed Sarham! "Heroic operations. . ." was the official Libyan comment on the airport attacks.<sup>16</sup> The Rome episode clearly shows the cycle of terror, death, and retaliation which has pushed terrorism to its ultimate depravity - the premeditated murder of innocent children. It also shows that indiscriminate retaliation leads to an increasing cycle of violence and does not deter terrorism. The United States must avoid the blow-for-blow response pattern to terrorism which the Israelis have pursued. This method of dealing with terrorists conditions them to anticipate reprisal operations, but does not deter them.

It is the nature of terrorism to command attention during a dramatic incident and then quickly recede into the background, allowing public and official concern to subside. As a result, terrorists repeatedly have caught governments with their defensive guards down. A government's chances of prevailing at such a time may be severely limited. Every terrorist incident is unique and each may require different responses.

Nevertheless, those responses can be most effective only if the government's anti-terrorist machinery is continually in a high state of readiness.

The reader may ask why we should concern ourselves with terrorism. The losses from terrorist attacks, although unfortunate, are minimal when compared to the approximately 40,000 highway deaths or the approximately 18,000 murders that occur annually in the United States. There is much more at risk than the senseless loss of lives. Terrorism threatens the highly sophisticated infrastructure of our society. We are technologically vulnerable. "Transportation, energy, communications, finance, industry, medicine, defense, diplomacy and government itself rely on intricate inter-related networks."<sup>17</sup> Our fragility is shown by regional power failures in large urban centers, traffic jams, reactor shut-downs and disruptions in our highly computerized environment. Terrorism strikes at law and order, seeks destabilization and hurts the open exchange between friendly governments. It is a way to avoid the high costs of war and has become another means of conducting foreign affairs. Terrorists have shown that it is possible to confront a superpower like the United States. Americans must realize that there are many wrongs and many deprived people in the world. Some of those people believe only in violence. A very real danger exists that international terrorism will come to our own shores. Up to now, international terrorist groups have found it safer and easier to target American citizens, facilities and aircraft overseas than within the United States.

Our vulnerability remains despite the fact that the United States has been highly successful in combatting terrorism internally. For example,

the number of internal terrorist incidents has steadily declined since 1982. In 1985, there were seven incidents which resulted in two deaths and ten injuries. Also, twenty-three terrorist missions in the United States were thwarted. In 1984, there were thirteen incidents with no deaths or injuries. The 1984 figure is especially noteworthy because of the two national political conventions held in Dallas and San Francisco and the Summer Olympic Games held in Los Angeles.<sup>18</sup>

The response to international terrorism presents a significant challenge to the United States. We want to respond, but the question is how? The response must have a legal and moral foundation, and it must be politically feasible. It must have an element of proportionality; that is, we cannot be "saving up" and "unloading" all at one time. The response is often a moral issue because the fundamental issue is "What is the justification for the use of violence and how will it be used?" The public attitude and understanding at home and abroad remain a major concern affecting perceptions of our government's willingness and ability to deal with the problem. Most Americans agree that terrorism is one of the nation's more serious challenges and want something to be done, but they lack a clear idea of exactly what. A research project conducted in November 1985 helped to document the attitudes of the American public. The project showed "that Americans believe terrorism affects perception of the United States as a powerful country and world leader. Terrorism reduces America's status to being seen as a 'pawn' - powerless, easily manipulated and at the mercy of attackers because Americans cannot or do not fight back."<sup>19</sup> A continued and expanded program of explanations by senior government

officials, emphasizing the constraints posed by the sovereignty of foreign nations, concern for human life, and the rule of law will help alleviate the feelings of helpless anger and frustration that results from terrorist incidents.

The U.S. Government is organized in separate but parallel ways to deal with two distinct aspects of the problem of international terrorism - policy and incident management. The Interdepartmental Group on Terrorism is the senior executive branch organization devoted solely to the problem of terrorism. This group, which meets at least monthly, is the principal vehicle for coordinating terrorism policy and programs, and is chaired by the Director of the Office for Combatting Terrorism of the Department of State. It deals with issues such as international cooperation, research and development, legislation, public diplomacy, training programs and antiterrorist exercises. The group is composed of representatives of the Departments of Justice/FBI (which provides the deputy chairman), Defense/Joint Chiefs of Staff, Energy, Treasury and Transportation; the Central Intelligence Agency, National Security Council and the Office of the Vice President. Since its inception, the Interdepartmental Group on Terrorism has conducted a complete review of U.S. policy and has proposed several initiatives. The group has established a clear operational arrangement to provide support to the President and other key decision-makers during a terrorist incident.

Since April 1982, the government response to the management of terrorist incidents is based on the "lead agency" concept. The Department of State has the lead in incidents that take place outside U.S. territory;

the Department of Justice and FBI have the lead in domestic incidents; and, the Department of Transportation and Federal Aviation Administration play a key role in skyjackings of U.S. flag carriers within the United States. When a terrorist incident occurs overseas, the State Department immediately convenes a task force under the direction of the Office for Combatting Terrorism to manage the U.S. response. The task force is in operation around the clock until the incident is resolved. It is composed of representatives from the appropriate geographic and functional bureaus in the State Department and from other affected agencies. The National Security Council, which advises the President on national security matters, serves as liaison between the White House and the responsible lead agency.<sup>20</sup>

The main elements of the federal program to combat terrorism continue at modest rates of growth. The nation spent about \$2 billion in 1985 to combat terrorism both in the United States and overseas. Within the next four years, the thrust of the funding and manpower increases will be toward improved security for people, buildings and military forces within the U.S. and overseas; increased assistance to friendly governments through the Antiterrorist Assistance Program established in 1983; more law enforcement and prosecution of terrorists; better security for civil aviation and maritime activities; and better, more timely intelligence.

The current U.S. policy on terrorism has evolved through years of experience in combatting terrorism and is an outgrowth of responses by various administrations. In welcoming home the Iranian hostages at the very beginning of his first term of office, President Reagan reaffirmed U.S. policy on terrorism by stating: "Let terrorists be aware that when the

rules of international behavior are violated, our policy will be one of swift and effective retribution."<sup>22</sup> The U.S. position is very clear: we are opposed to terrorism in all its forms and wherever it takes place. We condemn terrorist acts as criminal and have publicly stated that we will take all possible lawful measures to resolve the incident and to bring justice to the perpetrators. This policy is based on the belief that to allow terrorists to succeed only leads to more terrorism; if terrorists are successful they will commit more such acts. The United States gives no concessions to terrorist blackmail - we pay no ransoms and do not release prisoners in response to such demands. When a terrorist incident occurs outside the United States, we recognize host government sovereignty to exercise its responsibility under international law to protect persons within its jurisdiction and to enforce the law in its territory. In the case of state-sponsored terrorism, we will take appropriate measures - legal, political, economic or military - to resolve incidents. The United States has a clearly stated policy: we will continue to act in a forceful manner against terrorists without surrendering our basic freedoms or endangering democratic principles. But our policy is no better than the will to carry it out and the effectiveness of the structure and organizations that we have established to deal with the problem.

Our national strategy to combat terrorism must embrace the whole range of threats to American citizens, property and interests. We need a coordinated national response to fight this serious challenge to our democratic principles and way of life. Our strategy should be divided into three broad categories: defensive, managerial and long-term.

In the first category, we must continue to improve airport and embassy security, increase our intelligence capabilities and exchange information about terrorist groups and their activities with friendly governments. Accurate, timely intelligence is absolutely essential for our decision makers. We should emphasize the development of improvements in technical intelligence capabilities, which complement human intelligence capabilities. Those Americans and their families who serve overseas must be adequately informed of the terrorist threat in their particular area and must receive frequent information updates and training in defensive or passive measures to thwart terrorist successes. The development of proper attitudes and a keen sense of terrorism awareness are absolutely essential. Our government should keep to an absolute minimum the number of Americans who serve in high threat areas (consistent with other commitments) and should frequently review the need for their continued presence overseas. Finally, we must continue to develop and improve the capabilities of designated military forces so that they can respond quickly and effectively if called upon. While we must keep the military response option open, we must remember that it is highly risky. Our success in forcing the Achille Lauro hijackers to land in Sicily demonstrated our resolve and the benefits of careful planning and accurate, detailed intelligence.

In the terrorism management area, the United States has made significant strides in establishing the necessary working groups and agencies to deal with the threat. Continued success will require constant vigilance, planning and the exercise of our organizational system in order to



have confidence that we can deal effectively with terrorist incidents. There is a need for the government to take the initiative in keeping the public informed of its actions in dealing with terrorism (without compromising intelligence). The President's establishment in July 1985 of a cabinet level task force, chaired by the Vice President, with a mandate to examine and evaluate the policies, priorities and capabilities of the national program to combat terrorism is indicative of the commitment against terrorism in the Reagan administration. (The Public Report of the Vice President's Task Force on Combatting Terrorism was published in February 1986.) Our Congress has recently passed laws which have expanded the government's jurisdiction over terrorists and have closed some of the loopholes which in the past had hindered successful prosecution. Several significant bills aimed at correcting many of the remaining statutory shortfalls are currently pending in Congress. For example, the murder of U.S. citizens outside our borders, other than of specially designated officials and diplomats, is not a crime under U.S. law. The passage of the pending laws is a must in order to keep up our momentum in the war against terrorism. A review of our Freedom of Information Act is urgently needed. Terrorists as well as unfriendly foreign governments have allegedly used the act to gain sensitive information. If the review confirms these allegations, the law must be changed.

An exceptionally sensitive issue when dealing with the management of terrorism is the relationship of the media and the government. The essential issue is the effective handling of public information needs by both the media and the government during an incident. The media see

coverage of terrorist acts as a professional responsibility. Terrorists count on the media to convey their message to the widest possible audience. A cooperative approach between the media and government is needed. Untimely, uninformed or excessive information can interfere with the successful resolution of an incident. On the other hand, government officials must give consistent statements and should keep them within cleared guidance. Government and the media must develop guidelines which will be the foundation of a reliable system for determining what should be said publicly in connection with an ongoing or unresolved incident.

Finally, the long term strategy for combatting terrorism involves the development of bilateral, multilateral and international agreements. The United States should continue to support the efforts of international organizations to bring certain terrorist acts within criminal law. The key to a successful strike against terrorism is international understanding and cooperation. (A precedent exists - the nations of the world have successfully dealt with the piracy problem of earlier days.) Like-minded nations must increase their terrorism awareness, coordination and information flow; there is a need for increased intelligence sharing and improved physical security arrangements, especially at several overseas airports. The most difficult challenge is to deal with the problems that are the root causes of terrorism. There are many real and perceived injustices that span every facet of human activity. We can address the sources of political grievances which give rise to terrorism and we can alleviate some of its causes. But we must recognize that terrorism is not solvable. Our aim should be to understand, manage and control it. We should not

overreact, but we must recognize terrorism for what it is - a form of warfare which is likely to increase in the years ahead.

In conclusion, terrorism is a complex, difficult phenomenon, more easily described than defined, which poses a significant challenge to our democratic values, beliefs, way of life and international stability. It is an ancient phenomenon - but not well understood - which in recent years has often dominated world news. Rapid technological advancements - in television, satellite communications and jet travel - have quickly brought the message of terrorism to every part of the globe. Terrorism has definite purposes and the inability of a government to respond effectively to terrorist incidents undermines the confidence of both its citizens and its allies. The United States has successfully curbed domestic terrorism and has established an effective government organization for antiterrorism planning, coordination and policy formulation. America's policy on terrorism is very clear: we will be forceful but we will not surrender basic freedoms or endanger democratic principles. The steady increase in international terrorism - as a type of warfare directed against America and her allies - threatens the highly sophisticated infrastructure of our society. A very real danger exists that international terrorism will come to our own shores. In all incidents of terrorism, our response must be appropriate to the event - carefully measured and proportional, but not excessive. Our first line of defense in this struggle is international cooperation and accurate, timely intelligence.

## ENDNOTES

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18. Ibid., pp. 5-6.
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